

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03

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R 170801Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6660

INFO SECDEF

CSAF(JACI)

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CINCPACAF

CINCPACREPPHIL

13TH AF

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 8123

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR RP

SUBJECT: CAPT. DONALD E. DAWSON

1. THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT CAPTAIN DONALD E. DAWSON, 348TH BOMBARDMENT SQ. (SAC) HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO CLARK AIR BASE FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND POSSIBLE JUDICIAL ACTION IN RELATION TO HIS ALLEGED CONDUCT WHILE ATTACHED TO 307 STRATEGIC WING.

2. IT CAN REASONABLY BE EXPECTED THAT THE PROCESSING OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF HIS CASE WILL TAKE SOME TIME. SINCE THIS CASE HAS ATTRACTED MUCH PUBLICITY ALREADY AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO ATTRACT EVEN MORE IF AND WHEN IT REACHES JUDICIAL STAGE, EMBASSY HAS REFLECTED ON ADVISABILITY OF DAWSON'S TRANSFER TO PHILIPPINES FOR EVENTUAL TRIAL. IT WILL OBVIOUSLY NOT ESCAPE PHIL ATTENTION THAT U.S. AIR FORCE APPARENTLY UNABLE TO PROCEED IN COUNTRY IN WHICH ALLEGED ACTION BY CAPT. DAWSON OCCURRED, AND THE PHILS MAY VERY WELL WONDER, PARTICULARLY IF EXPECTED INFLUX OF REPORTERS ARRIVES, WHY THE
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U.S. FEELS THAT THE PHILIPPINE BASES ARE BETTER SITUATED

FOR SUCH ACTIVITY.

3. THE PROBABILITY OF PUBLICITY IN WHICH U.S. AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA WILL BE PLAYED UP NEGATIVELY WILL FOCUS INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION ON THE PHILIPPINES AND CONNECT BY IMPLICATION, HOWEVER TENUOUS, PHILIPPINES WITH SUCH OPERATIONS. (B-52 REFUELING IN AREAS ADJACENT TO PHILIPPINES HAS LARGELY ESCAPED MEDIA ATTENTION). PHILIPPINES ALREADY STRUGGLING TO OVERCOME NEGATIVE EFFECTS INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF MARTIAL LAW REGIME. FOCUSING ATTENTION OF ANTIWAR PARTISANS ON PHILIPPINES THROUGH DAWSON CASE WOULD TEND TO COMPLICATE PHIL MEDIA PROBLEM. SUCH EXACERBATION OF PROBLEM WOULD NOT BE APPRECIATED, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE INCIDENT IS IN NO REAL WAY CONNECTED WITH OUR BASES HERE AND COMPLETELY UNASSOCIATED WITH ANY PHIL INTERESTS.

4. EMBASSY ALSO NOTES THAT POSSIBLE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS MAY COINCIDE WITH ARRIVAL OF NEW AMBASSADOR.

5. CONSEQUENTLY, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS EXAMINE RAMIFICATIONS OF PROCEEDING WITH THE ACTION AGAINST CAPT. DAWSON IN THE PHILIPPINES AND CONSIDER WHETHER THERE IS NOT A MORE APPROPRIATE SITE AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES.
HAMILTON

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